# WOOL AND MOHAIR PRODUCTIONS

OF THE

# CAPE COLONY.

LONDON: PRINTED BY EDWARD STANFORD,
26 & 27 COCKSPUR STREET, CHARING CROSS, S.W.
1893.

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## WOOL.

The first mention of Merino sheep at the Cape is to be found in the 1784 edition of 'Cook's Voyages,' where it is stated that the Dutch Governor at the time, in order to promote the wool industry, had taken pains to import Merino sheep of Spanish breed, but had met with little success, the farmers being prejudiced in favour of an indigenous breed of short-haired sheep remarkable for their large tails.

In 1785 the Dutch East India Company sent out a number of rams of the Escurial breed, and these being crossed with the hairy sheep, produced an animal with a rough but abundant fleece.

The first endeavour to establish a pure breed of

woolled sheep appears, however, to have been made in 1812, when two gentlemen, Messrs. Van Breda and Reitz, introduced into the Cape Colony some stock of the genuine Electoral breed imported from Saxony, and located them in the Swellendam District in the South-western Province.

The English Albany settlers, too, in 1820, imported sheep of the Spanish breed, and since that date most praiseworthy individual efforts have successfully been made to introduce rams of high-class breed; and, stimulated no doubt by the valuable prizes offered at the various agricultural shows, both for wool and stock, a marked improvement in the exhibits has year by year been noticeable.

The progress of the wool industry may be gauged by the fact that 30,000 lb. were exported in 1830, as against 75,520,700 lb. in 1891.

The wool of the Colony is of two qualities, named respectively Karoo and Grass Veldt; the former is produced on the Karoo—large plains covered with red loam, extending over the Midland and part of the North-western Provinces, subject to protracted droughts, but very fertile and affording excellent

pasturage for sheep—the wool being of a yellow colour, fine texture, but heavy, owing to the nature of the soil. The superior qualities of these Karoo wools are fully recognised in the American market.

The Grass Veldt wool is obtained in the districts bordering on the sea coast, and in the North-eastern and Eastern Provinces; it is characterised by its bluish colour, strength of staple, and fineness, being considerably lighter than that of the Karoo.

## MOHAIR.

Angora goats were first introduced into the Cape Colony from Turkey about the year 1854. Since that date frequent importations of thoroughbred stock have been made, the most important being that by the late J. B. Evans, in 1878, who personally secured in Asia Minor a number of the finest animals obtainable.

The Colony has been found to be specially adapted for the rearing of Angora goats, which are most prolific, and, though a comparatively

young industry, the export of mohair in 1891 was 9,953,548 lb.

Cape mohair, though often deficient in length of staple (owing to the breeders shearing twice a year), compares very favourably in other respects with that from Turkey; being, according to Bradford authorities, better in colour, softer and finer in texture, and almost equal to it in lustre.

The principal mohair-producing districts are located within the circle shown in the accompanying map.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF SHEEP, THE WEIGHT AND DESCRIPTION OF WOOL PRODUCED IN EACH OF THE SEVERAL PROVINCES OF THE CAPE COLONY.

| Name of Province. | Number of Sheep. | Weight of Wool. | Nature of Country and Climate. | Description and Quality of Wool. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | lb. | | |
| Western .. .. | 63,897 | 255,905 | Mountainous, with fertile and well watered valleys suited for viticulture, the leading farming industry. 1590 square miles. | Short, seedy, and irregular. |
| North-Western .. | 931,843 | 3,316,728 | Mountainous and well watered in the south, arid and uncultivated in the north, but with excellent Karoo pasturage in the eastern portion. 66,040 square miles. | Principally mountain wool, which is of a bluish colour, of long and strong staple. Karoo wool also is grown in parts, and is of a yellow colour, fine texture, but heavy, owing to the nature of the soil. |
| South-Western .. | 877,844 | 2,697,208 | Fertile and well watered undulating country, with regular rainfall and temperate climate, affording excellent pasturage in parts. 18,016 square miles. | The principal wool producing district is Caledon, which produces long combing blue Grass Veldt of strong staple and good quality, which finds much favour in the American market. |
| Midland .. .. | 3,886,480 | 16,323,870 | "Karoo" country, extensive plains, intersected with lofty mountain ranges, very fertile, with excellent pasture, but marred by frequent droughts. 63,800 square miles. | The best Karoo wool is grown in this province, varying from very heavy and irregular to long combing yellow yolky wools. Through the importation of thoroughbred stock much improvement is noticeable of late years. |
| South-Eastern .. | 335,048 | 1,319,344 | An arable country, with luxuriant grassy slopes, but poor pasturage, known as "sour" Grass Veldt; temperate climate, with plentiful summer rains. 11,214 square miles. | Grass Veldt wools of indifferent quality, but improving during the last few seasons. |
| North-Eastern .. | 2,615,883 | 11,778,229 | Extensive Grass Veldt plains intersected with lofty mountain ranges; healthy pasturage for sheep; climate dry, with heavy thunder rains in summer. 18,716 square miles. | These provinces produce the Grass Veldt wool similar to that obtained in some districts of the South-western Province. It differs from the Karoo wool in being more yolky, but not as heavy, and is of a bluish colour. The shrinkage is generally from 55 to 60 per cent. These wools are being greatly improved, owing to extensive importation of thoroughbred stock. |
| Eastern .. .. | 4,636,439 | 19,561,742 | High tablelands, comprising the chief pastoral districts of the Colony; regular rainfall and healthy climate. 26,311 square miles. | |
| Griqualand West | 283,577 | 785,633 | High tableland, sandy soil, with little vegetation; climate dry, with extremes of heat and cold. 15,197 square miles. | Grass Veldt wool of very super quality is obtained, but, unfortunately, only in small quantities, which, however, is annually increasing. |
| Total .. | 13,631,011 | 56,038,659 | | |

## WOOL EXPORT.*

STATEMENT SHOWING THE QUANTITY AND VALUE OF WOOL EXPORTED FROM SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE YEARS 1886 TO 1891 INCLUSIVE.

| Year. | Cape Colony. | | Natal. | | Total. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Quantity. | Value. | Quantity. | Value. | Quantity. | Value. |
| | lb. | £ | lb. | £ | lb. | £ |
| 1886 | 47,454,153 | 1,580,432 | 21,750,836 | 532,965 | 69,204,989 | 2,113,397 |
| 1887 | 44,758,295 | 1,674,931 | 22,250,834 | 631,171 | 67,009,129 | 2,306,102 |
| 1888 | 66,353,699 | 2,181,510 | 28,982,247 | 745,749 | 95,335,946 | 2,927,259 |
| 1889 | 68,107,541 | 2,251,375 | 29,489,716 | 752,182 | 97,597,257 | 3,003,557 |
| 1890 | 65,655,917 | 2,196,040 | 26,780,282 | 725,118 | 92,436,199 | 2,921,158 |
| 1891 | 75,520,701 | 2,264,498 | 27,688,314 | 761,560 | 103,209,015 | 3,026,058 |

* The whole of the wool produce of the Orange Free State and other inland States is exported *viâ* the ports of the Cape Colony and Natal. That of the Orange Free State in 1891 exceeded 20,000,000 lb.

STATEMENT SHOWING THE QUANTITIES OF "FLEECE WASHED," "SCOURED," AND "GREASE" WOOL SHIPPED FROM THE CAPE COLONY IN EACH YEAR FROM 1881 to 1891, AND THE EQUIVALENT THEREOF IN "GREASE WOOL."

| Year. | Description of Wool. | | | Equivalent to Grease Wool. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fleece Washed. | Scoured. | Grease. | |
| | lb. | lb. | lb. | lb. |
| 1881 | 7,305,736 | 21,621,898 | 13,842,610 | 78,334,120 |
| 1882 | 6,547,604 | 17,652,956 | 17,488,559 | 70,974,669 |
| 1883 | 5,621,968 | 19,317,428 | 13,090,099 | 69,415,052 |
| 1884 | 5,971,354 | 17,453,419 | 13,845,842 | 66,009,895 |
| 1885 | 4,392,080 | 17,638,876 | 12,401,606 | 62,773,196 |
| 1886 | 5,104,042 | 19,027,750 | 23,322,361 | 78,183,225 |
| 1887 | 4,737,543 | 18,405,413 | 21,615,339 | 74,396,789 |
| 1888 | 5,137,735 | 20,352,819 | 40,863,145 | 99,084,813 |
| 1889 | 4,691,001 | 13,257,400 | 50,159,140 | 90,004,070 |
| 1890 | 3,938,111 | 14,736,680 | 46,981,126 | 89,448,699 |
| 1891 | 4,436,186 | 14,012,859 | 57,071,656 | 98,441,213 |

NOTE.—Fleece Washed Wool .. .. .. 70 lb. = 100 lb. Grease.
Scoured Wool .. .. .. .. .. 40 lb. = 100 lb. Grease.

The greater portion of the wool grown in the Orange Free State is shipped through Colonial ports.

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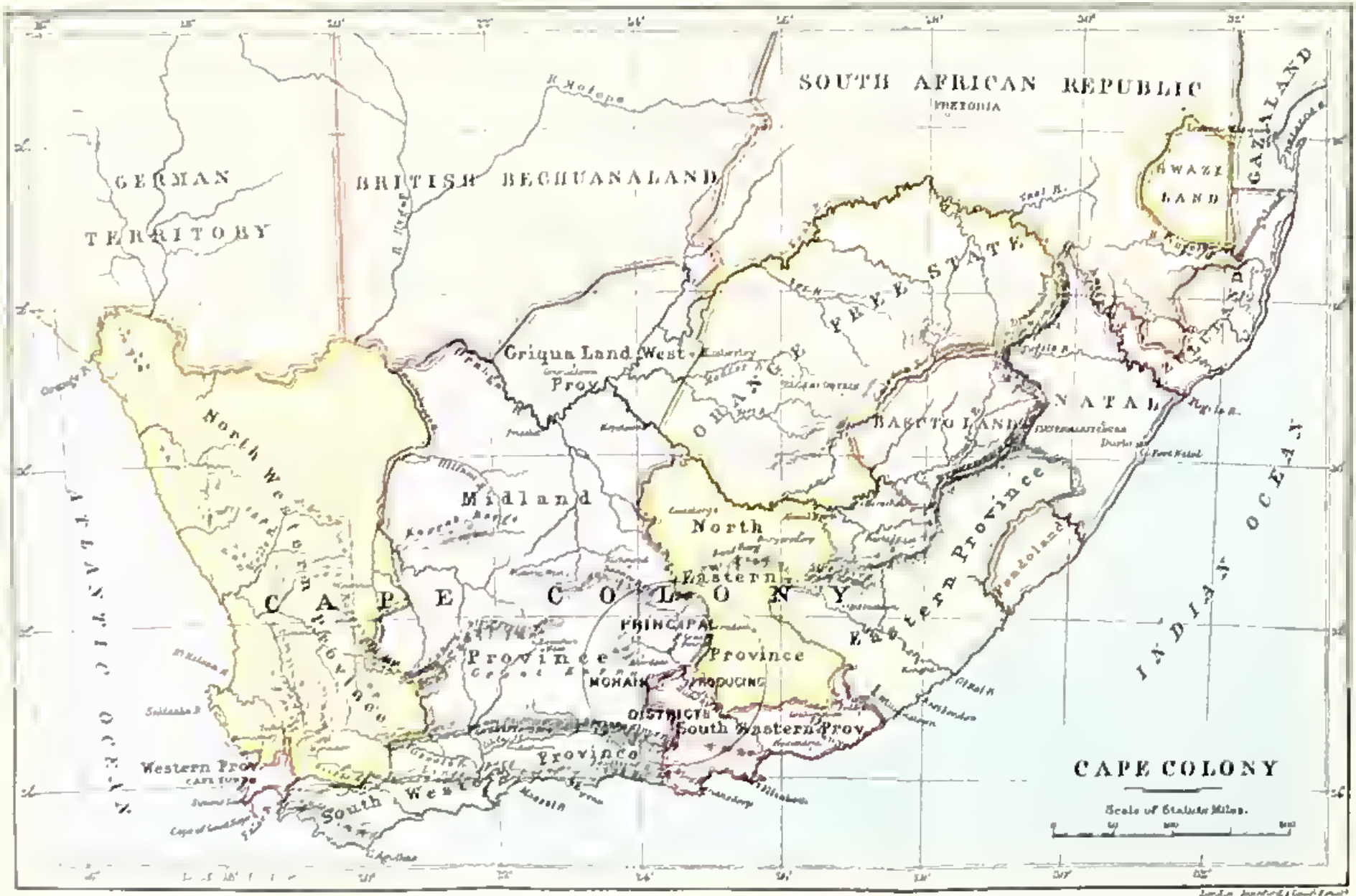


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